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- NEWS RELEASE -

SECRETARY BYSIEWICZ ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 2008 DEMOCRACY CUP

STAMFORD, NEWTOWN, WESTON AND NEW HARTFORD TAKE HONORS FOR TOP
VOTER TURNOUT

Hartford: Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz announced today that New Hartford (94.78%), Weston (90.84%), Newtown (88.97%), and Stamford (81.65%) are the winners of the 2008 "Democracy Cup." The award is given annually to the small, medium, large-sized towns and city with the highest voter turnout on Election Day.

"This year's election was the most exciting in a generation," said Bysiewicz. "Scores of new voters – young and old - went to the polls to make their voices heard. I congratulate these four towns for doing the best job this year of getting voters out to the polls. The involvement of citizens in the democratic process is the cornerstone of our civic life and this year the voters of New Hartford, Weston, Newtown, and Stamford proved they are leaders."

Co-sponsored by the East Haddam Civic Association since 2000, the Democracy Cup was created as a way to encourage voter participation in each year's elections. Under Democracy Cup criteria established by Secretary Bysiewicz, towns with fewer than 5,000 registered voters are considered small; municipalities with between 5,000 and 14,999 registered voters are considered mid-sized, towns with 15,000 and 49,999 registered voters are considered large towns. This year, for the first time, cities with more than 50,000 registered voters are their own category.

“All Connecticut communities should be proud of their voter participation this year, but none more so than our big cities; especially Stamford,” said Scot Mackinnon, co-founder of the Democracy Cup and East Haddam Civic Association member. “While New Hartford’s astounding 94.78% was the best turnout overall, Stamford’s 81.65% is amazing for a city with so many active registered voters. Typically, while smaller municipalities have an easier time getting voters to the polls, urban centers, like Stamford, New Haven and Hartford, are gaining ground. This is a trend worth celebrating.”

The Office of the Secretary of the State has implemented an aggressive voter registration program. As part of her effort to increase voter registration in Connecticut, Secretary Bysiewicz this past year registered more than 3,000 high school students. The office also registers new citizens to vote at naturalization ceremonies and other events across Connecticut. The Office of the Secretary of the State recently concluded the first-of-its-kind statewide effort to increase Latino voter registration in Connecticut. More than 21,000 Latinos registered to vote as part of the “¡Tu Voto *Si* Cuenta!” campaign. Between January 1, 2008 and the October 28, 2008 voter registration deadline more than 300,000 Connecticut residents registered to vote.

Each winning town will be able to host and display a Democracy Cup trophy through next year’s November elections. Trophy presentation ceremonies are currently being scheduled for December.

Democracy Cup Winners 2000-2008

YEAR	SMALL TOWN	MEDIUM TOWN	LARGE TOWN	CITY
2008	New Hartford	Weston	Newtown	Stamford
2007	East Haven	North Haven	West Hartford	
2006	Union	Westport	West Hartford	
2005	Middlebury	Shelton	West Hartford	
2004	Washington	Wethersfield	Fairfield	
2003	Washington	Naugatuck	West Hartford	
2002	Middlebury	Glastonbury	West Hartford	
2001	Washington	Trumbull	Waterbury	
2000	Essex	Westport	West Hartford	